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Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund

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Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit

Summary

In 2003, UNDP contributed to the preparation of several reports or pre-reports of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) through its direct inputs and through its inputs and comments via the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) in the context of the reform of inter-agency coordination mechanisms initiated by the Secretary-General. The present report provides a synopsis of each JIU report followed by selected recommendations of interest to UNDP from each report and UNDP comments thereon.

Elements of a decision

The Executive Board may wish to take note of the present report, particularly those aspects of the JIU reports that have particular relevance to the work of UNDP.

Individual reports

A. Review of management and administration in the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (JIU/REP/2003/1)

Scope

1. The objective of the report is to take stock of reform measures undertaken in recent years in the secretariat of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and, in view of the assessment of these measures, to identify further improvements in administration and management aimed at optimizing the

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use of UNIDO funds in the most efficient manner and strengthening the role of UNIDO in the United Nations system.

Comments by UNDP

2. UNDP has reviewed the report and has taken note of the recommendations.

B. Review of the United Nations budgetary process (JIU/REP/2003/2)

Scope

3. The objective of the report is to appraise the efficiency and effectiveness of the current United Nations budgetary process and present a number of alternatives to the General Assembly for an improved planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation process at the United Nations, taking into account, in part, experience and practices in a number of United Nations system organizations.

Comments by UNDP

4. UNDP has noted that this report has focused on the specialized agencies, not on the United Nations funds and programmes, and notes that three alternatives have been made to the General Assembly on budgetary process changes. UNDP will follow the General Assembly deliberations on this report.

C. From the optical disk system to the official documents system (ODS): status of implementation and evaluation (JIU/REP/2003/3)

Scope

5. The objective of the report is to assess the status of implementation of the Official Documents System (ODS), with a view to identifying remaining policy and management issues, which, if addressed, could contribute to widening its use as an archival and retrieval system of official documents for the United Nations and other interested organizations.

Comments by UNDP

6. The JIU recommended that UNDP should post its conference room papers on the ODS. UNDP is pleased to report that following discussions with the United Nations

Documentation Control Unit conference room papers will be posted on the ODS retroactively to the date of this report.

D. Achieving the universal primary education goal of the Millennium Declaration. New challenges for development cooperation (JIU/REP/2003/5)

Scope

7. The purpose of this report is to examine whether at this time all the conditions are in place to allow Member States to attain the universal primary education (UPE) and completion goal so often stated in the past and most recently in the Millennium Declaration.

Comments by UNDP

8. UNDP provided input to the JIU on this report when the draft was circulated for comments. Subsequent to the issue of the final report earlier this year, UNDP has also provided comments to the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) to incorporate in its note of the Secretary-General to the Member States in response to the JIU report.

E. Management review of the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (JIU/REP/2003/6)

Scope

9. The objective of the report is to review the management and administration of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (the Office) as requested by the Commission on Human Rights, with particular emphasis on recruitment policies and the composition of the staff of the Office, with a view to recommending improvements.

Comments by UNDP

10. UNDP has reviewed the report and taken note of its recommendations.

F. Evaluation of the United Nations Volunteers programme (JIU/REP/2003/7)

Scope

11. The objective of the report is to evaluate the administrative and management structure and methods at United Nations Volunteers (UNV), with a view to recommending improvements that could ensure the most efficient use of resources.

Comments by UNDP

12. Generally, and subject to further comments and observations below, UNDP finds the conclusions balanced and constructive, in particular as expressed in the main body of the report. UNDP is pleased with the JIU conclusion that UNV, as a UNDP-administered programme, has proven to be dynamic and highly adaptable, responding rapidly to changing, expanding demands. It also commends its high degree of commitment to continuous improvement and its enhanced profile, distinctive image and core values. In this connection, UNDP generally welcomes the recommendations and suggestions made in a number of areas.

13. UNDP notes the findings of the JIU confirming that the positive impact of actions taken by UNV and UNDP in the area of management and administration have been sustained and developed further. These actions have been guided, in particular, by the earlier, far-reaching workflow review undertaken by UNV and the extensive management audit carried out by the UNDP Office of Audit and Performance Review in the late 1990s.

14. UNDP understands that the Executive Board will continue to review, as it has done in the past, those areas that the JIU has mentioned as possibly requiring guidance from the Board.

15. The findings of the JIU, when combined with those pertaining to the more substantive aspects of the UNV programme, confirm the relevance of UNV as it has evolved over recent years, thanks in particular to its use of the International Year of Volunteers 2001 as a strategic opportunity. In this connection, UNDP draws attention to the biennial report of the Administrator on UNV, which is submitted to the Executive Board at its current annual session in document DP/2004/24.